

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 05 ANKARA 006426

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR INR/R/MR, EUR/SE, EUR/PD, NEA/PD, DRL
JCS PASS J-5/CDR S. WRIGHT

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [OPRC](#) [KMDR](#)

SUBJECT: ANKARA MEDIA REACTION REPORT

MONDAY, OCTOBER 24, 2005

THIS REPORT PRESENTS THE TURKISH PRESS SUMMARY UNDER THREE THEMES:

HEADLINES

BRIEFING

EDITORIAL OPINION

HEADLINES

MASS APPEAL

Papadopoulos Expects New UN Initiative on Cyprus - Vatan
NATO to Help Earthquake Victims in Kashmir - Hurriyet
Turkey to Send 150 Million USD to Pakistan - Hurriyet 10/22
UN Hariri Report Corners Assad - Milliyet 10/22
Sanctions against Damascus at Doorstep - Milliyet 10/23
Saddam's Lawyer Killed in Iraq - Sabah 10/22
Police Disperse Opposition Rally in Baku - Milliyet
US to Set Up Three Bases in Romania - Star
Tough Week for President Bush - Milliyet
DeLay Briefly Detained in Houston - Sabah 10/22
Avian Flu Spreads to Britain - Vatan 10/23

OPINION MAKERS

Papadopoulos Expects New UN Cyprus Initiative - Radikal
Barzani Visits US - Yeni Safak
US, UK Step Up Pressure against Syria - Zaman
45 Percent of Iraqis Support Insurgent Attacks - Zaman
No Support for Occupation Forces in Iraq - Cumhuriyet
Iraqis Approve Insurgent Attacks against Coalition - Radikal
Greek Support to Turkey's EU Bid Increases - Radikal 10/23
Turkish Investors Worried about Sanctions on Syria - Zaman
10/23
Wilma Strikes Mexico: 6 Killed - Yeni Safak

BRIEFING

NSC Convenes Today: Turkey's National Security Council (NSC) will convene today to discuss the draft National Security Policy Document, which outlines Turkey's internal and foreign security strategies, Monday papers report. The draft document claims that some parties and NGOs in Turkey give logistical support to the outlawed PKK as part of a campaign aimed at legitimization of the terrorist organization. The NSC will also discuss domestic security threats such as fundamentalism, leftist extremism, and missionary activities.

TGS Terror Briefing for Military Attachés: The Turkish General Staff (TGS) gave a 'terror briefing' to foreign military attachés in Ankara in which the activities of the PKK were explained in detail, "Milliyet" reported on Saturday. PKK attacks have claimed 1,007 lives since June 12004. The PKK earns 600 million USD annually from narcotics trafficking, and has established affiliate organizations in 30 countries, mainly in Europe, TGS told the military attachés. The TGS also criticized the US for taking no measures against the PKK in northern Iraq, and called on the Iraqi government to prevent terrorist infiltration into Turkey.

Turkey Steps up Pressure for Closure of Mahmur Camp: Turkey is putting pressure on the US to close the Mahmur Camp in northern Iraq, the all-news channel NTV reported on Friday. The two countries are busy discussing formulas for the removal of PKK elements from Mahmur, where civilians are also settled. The question of where the thousands of refugees would be relocated if Mahmur were closed worries both Turkish and American officials. The UN High Commission for Refugees is opposed to a military operation at the camp: 'If there are elements that would disturb the civilian character of the camp, then these should be eliminated in cooperation with the UN, without violating international law.' Turkey did not sign the agreement reached in 2004 for the return of refugees from Mahmur Camp, where over 10,000 Turkish Kurds have been living, because Ankara was unable to get the guarantees it wanted from the United States.

Americans Allegedly Meet with the PKK: An American delegation advised the PKK to lay down its arms at an October 4 meeting in the Kandil Mountains, Saturday's "Zaman" claims. Cemil Bayik, a leading figure in the PKK,

reportedly told the unnamed Americans that the PKK was willing to give up its weapons if their group is recognized as a political party and their members in prisons are released. American officials promised to support the PKK activities in the political arena if PKK militants agree to lay down their arms, "Zaman" claims.

Talabani Interview with The New Anatolian: The following are excerpts from responses by Iraqi President Jalal Talabani in an interview with the English-language daily "The New Anatolian" that appeared on Monday:

~Iraq's constitution guarantees federation rights for Iraqi Kurdistan, and also guarantees the rights of the other governorates in Iraq. The referendum was like a battle against terrorism. The conservatives called for a boycott and tried to prevent people from voting, but a great majority participated in the referendum. Compared to other countries like Lebanon and Egypt, the participation was much higher.'

~This is the first time in history that the President of the United States is inviting the President of the Kurdistan region. This is a kind of recognition of the identity of Iraqi Kurdistan by the US within the Iraq framework. I think the US will advise the Kurds to be more mindful of the unity of Iraq. They will encourage the Kurds to remain faithful to democracy and oppose all kinds of extremism, including fundamentalism and extreme nationalism.'

~It is possible to bring down the PKK from the mountains if there is a general amnesty in Turkey. It will also be helpful if there is some kind of a cooperation between Turkey, the Iraqi government, the PUK and the KDP on this issue. It will be impossible to solve the issue through force. The Iraqi army is not yet capable of doing that. If we push the PKK too far, they may cooperate with terrorists in Iraq like al-Qaida, Ansar al-Islam and Zarqawi. We think a political solution is the best way to end their so-called armed struggle.'

~I think the Americans will raise the PKK issue during the Barzani visit to Washington. The Americans are very much concerned about the PKK presence in Iraq and want to solve this problem. They are taking Turkish demands very seriously and are raising the issue with us at every occasion.'

~We can turn Kirkuk into a city of brotherhood among Kurds, Turkmen, and Arabs, who have always lived there. The future of Kirkuk will be decided according to article 58 of the constitution. This means that after two years we will ask the people of Kirkuk what they want. If they want to become part of the Kurdish federation, they are welcome.'

Talat to Visit US: Turkish Cypriot leader Mehmet Ali Talat, due to meet with Secretary Rice and UNSG Annan in the US on October 28, will demand political equality for both sides in Cyprus, Monday papers report. 'Turkish Cypriot FM' Serdar Denktas said it would not be rational to expect sanctions against Turkish Cyprus be lifted immediately after the visit of 'President' Talat to the United States next week. Denktas voiced hope for a settlement in Cyprus before Turkey joins the EU. Meanwhile, Monday's "Vatan" reports that Talat lashed out at former 'president' Rauf Denktas for turning Turkish Cyprus into a 'banana republic' by actions such as arbitrarily issuing Turkish Cypriot passports to Turkish nationals.

YOK-AKP Standoff: Tensions between the Higher Education Board (YOK) and the ruling AK Party government are rising. University presidents went to the eastern province of Van over the weekend to display support to the rector of Yuzuncu Yil University, Yucel Askin, who was jailed last week on claims of corruption. YOK President Erdogan Tezic complained about the lack of a peaceful environment in universities across Turkey. AKP lawmaker Ramazan Toprak accused Tezic of trying to block government attempts to change the law that regulates the YOK, and claimed that the Van rector was 'an Armenian.' Oppositon politicians and journalists promptly denounced Toprak's comment as racist. Dailies expect more tensions this week, when the AKP government submits to parliament a bill granting amnesty to academics who had been dismissed from universities for fundamentalist activities. Mainstream papers see the bill as the government's retaliation to YOK for protesting the Askin case. Meanwhile, Monday papers say that President Sezer has invited all 77 university rectors to the Turkish National Day reception at the presidential palace October 29 in a show of support for Turkey's educational establishment against the AKP government.

MFA on Nikiforos Military Exercise: Turkey will 'closely monitor' the Nikiforos military exercise to be held in the Mediterranean by the Greek Cypriots, Turkish Foreign Ministry (MFA) Spokesman Namik Tan said on Friday, adding that 'assessments will be made accordingly.' Tan said that

Ankara considered the exercise as an action that will hinder efforts for stability and cooperation in the region.

Turkish Businessmen Concerned About Possible Sanctions against Syria: Turkish businessmen investing in Syria are worried about possible international sanctions against Damascus, Sunday's "Zaman" reports. The Gaziantep Chamber of Commerce drew attention to improving political and economic ties between Turkey and Syria, saying that Syria is important for Turkey's attempts to improve ties with Arab countries. The Southeast Anatolian Federation of Businessmen said that industrialists from Gaziantep had been preparing for new investments in Syria, but added that they will follow the policies of the Turkish Foreign Ministry.

Erdogan Returns from Earthquake-Ravaged Pakistan: On Sunday, Prime Minister Erdogan said after returning from earthquake-stricken Pakistan that Turkey will help in the construction of 5,000 homes in the disaster zone. The earthquake claimed over 50,000 lives in Pakistan. Turkey has sent 15 cargo planes of humanitarian aid and will send 50,000 tons of flour and sugar to the region, Erdogan said. The Prime Minister pledged 150 million USD in disaster assistance during his visit to Pakistan last week.

Poll: Majority of Greeks Believe Turkey Will Join EU: Turkish papers cite the Saturday edition of the "Kathimerini" daily reporting a public opinion survey, which showed that 46 percent of Greeks believe that Turkey's accession to the EU is in the interests of Greece, while 38 percent disagree. 65 percent believe that Greek-Turkish relations will continue to improve. 60 percent of Greeks think that Turkey will succeed in joining the European bloc at the end of the negotiating process. Greeks remainare pessimistic, however, that Turkey's membership in the EU will contribute to resolving the Cyprus problem.

Poll: Iraqis Oppose Presence of Foreign Troops: Monday dailies cite the British daily "Sunday Telegraph" as reporting an opinion poll indicating that 45 percent of Iraqis consider insurgent attacks against coalition forces as right, and that 65 percent oppose the presence of foreign troops in the country. Less than one percent of those surveyed think that coalition forces came to Iraq to help provide security. 67 percent said they feel 'less secure' after the occupation. The nationwide survey reveals that American and British leaders have lost the battle for heart and minds in Iraq, according to the "Telegraph."

Blasts Halt Iraqi Oil Flow to Turkey: Four bomb blasts halted oil exports from northern Iraq to Turkey's Mediterranean port of Ceyhan and repairs could take up to a month, international wire services reported on Sunday. The pipeline, which has the capacity to carry more than 1.5 million barrels per day, has been closed for most of the post-invasion period. The flows to a storage facility on the border had increased from 200,000 to 500,000 to 700,000 barrels per day during the past week.

Erdogan Due in Yemen: Prime Minister Tayyip Erdogan will travel to Sanaa, Yemen together with a large delegation of officials and businessmen on October 25 for a three-day official visit.

'Best Western' to Increase Presence in Turkey: A representative for the US-based Best Western hotel chain said over the weekend that the company plans to open several new hotels along Turkey's Mediterranean Coast. Best Western also plans to move its headquarters for the Eastern Mediterranean region to Turkey from its present location in Israel.

EDITORIAL OPINION: Iraq; Syria

"Black Clouds Over the White House"
Ali Aslan observed from Washington in the Islamist-intellectual "Zaman" (10/24): "George Bush is certainly not the only US president who mixed foreign policy issues with domestic politics. But the White House has experienced its most significant damage in domestic politics as a result of the Iraq occupation and the masterminds of this action within the administration. Sources close to the administration continues to draw an optimistic picture of Iraq, saying that Iraq is going through an historic transition after democratic elections to end the tradition of dictatorship. But objective observers do not see such a bright situation in Iraq, and view the current democratic structure as an artificial one. . The Bush administration is having serious problems domestically. Iraq seems to be the one and only 'prestige project' for the Bush administration. Therefore, reports of even minor setbacks in Iraq are becoming a colossal headache for the Bush administration. This is one of reasons for the Bush administration's 'no action' stance against the PKK, despite Ankara's warnings about the PKK presence in northern Iraq. The Americans are aware that winning Turkish hearts requires

steps against the PKK. But they are now very much preoccupied with winning the hearts of their own people."

"The Syrian Regime Goes toward An End"
Erdal Safak commented in the mass appeal "Sabah" (10/22):
"The Hariri investigation report, along with the international consequences for the Damascus regime, will have a potential impact on Turkish-Syrian relations. First, the report clearly documents that the assassination was carried out by high-level Syrian officials. The US and France are prepared to take this issue to the Security Council, and will ask the UNSC to give Syria two options: either full cooperation on the Hariri issue, or total isolation. . If Assad elects to cooperate, the 40-year-old Baath regime in Damascus will come to an end, because Assad will not be able to cooperate with the UN if he is opposed by the Syrian intelligence service, the army, and high-rank Baath Party officials. But if he declines to accept the international ultimatum, he will face severe challenges, both domestic and foreign. . The US seems to have taken a lesson from Iraq, and does not want to carry out a military operation against Syria. The US will focus instead on moving the Damascus regime toward collapse by implementing full isolation, both diplomatic and economic."

"A Blow from the UN to Damascus"
Sami Kohen wrote in the mainstream daily "Milliyet" (10/22):
"As expected, the UN report linked Syrian officials with the Hariri murder. Of course, Syrian officials reject these allegations and accuse the UN inspectors of politicizing the issue. This report will form the basis for UN action and shape the future stance of the US administration toward Syria. The question is whether the US will be satisfied with the UN decision to blame those who are responsible for the assassination. Or will the US take a step forward and pressure the UN to apply sanctions against Syria? If some kind of sanctions come to the UN agenda, will Russia and China go along? It is obvious that the US will use the report as an excuse to pressure Syria. One of the possible means of pressure is a US military operation against Syria. Although Secretary Rice has said that 'every option is on the table,' many observers believe that this is little more than a psychological pressure tactic, and that the US has no desire at the moment for another military operation. We hope this is true. If the more recent "Washington Post" analysis is correct, the US strategy on Syria is not to topple Assad, but to change his policy. If the goal is to change Assad's policies through diplomatic channels, Turkey can play an active role that would be to everyone's benefit."

MCEDOWNEY